

## Bylaw 18115

### Text Amendment to Zoning Bylaw 12800 - Improving the Buildability and Quality of Garage and Garden Suites

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#### Purpose

To improve the buildability and quality of garage and garden suites.

#### Readings

Bylaw 18115 is ready for three readings after the public hearing has been held. If Council wishes to give three readings during a single meeting, Council must unanimously agree "That Bylaw 18115 be considered for third reading."

#### Advertising and Signing

This Bylaw has been advertised in the Edmonton Journal on Friday, June 23, 2017, and Saturday, July 1, 2017. The Bylaw can be passed following third reading.

#### Position of Administration

Administration supports this Bylaw.

#### Previous Council/Committee Action

At the May 24, 2017, Urban Planning Committee, the following motion was passed:

That Administration prepare amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800, as generally outlined in Attachment 1 and incorporate amendments as generally outlined in Option 2 of the May 24, 2017, Sustainable Development report CR\_4627, with the inclusion of the allowance of accessible design (i.e. Elevator) and the Proposed Approach for Developing Area Zones, and return to a future City Council Public Hearing.

#### Report

##### Background

Garage and garden suites were introduced as discretionary uses in Zoning Bylaw 12800 in 2007 and 2009, respectively. During the Evolving Infill conversations that took place in 2013 and 2014, garage and garden suites were identified as a key opportunity for Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods. The resulting Edmonton's Infill Roadmap identified the need to change Zoning Bylaw 12800 regulations to create more opportunities for garage and garden suites. In April of 2015, three changes were made:

- the minimum site area was reduced from 460 square metres to 400 square metres;
- garage suites were allowed to be 1.5 metres taller than the main house, up to 6.5 metres for a pitched roof or 5.5 metres for a flat roof, whichever is the lesser; and
- location criteria were removed in mature neighbourhoods.

These changes were specific to the actions identified in Edmonton's Infill Roadmap but did not include a comprehensive review of the garage and garden suite regulations.

Following the amendments made in April 2015, concerns were raised that a number of regulations continued to create barriers to building garage and garden suites. In December of 2015, a motion was made:

That Administration conduct some high level analysis and consult with the builders on the buildability of garage suites, including but not limited to:

- height of flat roof buildings versus sloped roofs
- whether there ought to be building articulation requirements to deal with large blank walls
- the tethering of floor area to the principal residences' floor area

In response to this motion, Administration conducted a comprehensive review of garage and garden suite regulations to improve the buildability and quality of these suites.

### Challenges Identified

From March 2016 to June 2016, Administration consulted with members of the development industry, past applicants for garage and garden suite permits, and community members in order to identify challenges surrounding the development of high quality garage and garden suites. The feedback received highlighted a number of barriers including:

- General inflexibility in regulations
- Discretionary use status
- Height and massing
- Floor area and site coverage
- Lack of design and articulation
- Windows and privacy
- Site area requirements
- Parking requirements
- Lack of accurate and useful information
- Insufficient investment in laneways to support their use as secondary streets

Administration has developed amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800 informed by public consultation and technical analysis that are intended to reduce barriers to developing garden and garage suites. These include:

- Increasing floor area and site coverage allowances to encourage more at-grade development, while reducing the maximum second storey floor area in mature and established area zones to decrease overall massing effects.
- Removing balconies, stairwells, and elevators from floor area calculations to encourage the provision amenity space and accessible suites.
- Collapsing garage and garden suites into a single garden suites use to provide clearer regulations and greater flexibility in design.
- Increasing maximum heights for flat-roofed buildings to allow more architectural variety and better quality living spaces.
- Adding a new grade calculation method to better reflect the site location of garage and garden suites.

- Removing the link between the size of the existing dwelling and the maximum height of the garage and garden suite to allow suites that complement future redevelopment.
- Adding requirements for articulation of exterior walls to ensure better quality development while still allowing flexibility in design.
- Providing clearer direction and requirements for window placement to support privacy of adjacent properties.
- Allowing garage and garden suites as a permitted use in low density residential zones while introducing methods to support information sharing with neighbours.
- Decreasing the required minimum site area in mature and established neighbourhood zones to align with the minimum site area required for secondary suites.
- Decreasing the minimum site area and removing locational criteria in developing area zones to facilitate garage and garden suites in new neighbourhoods.
- Reducing parking requirements for units designed to inclusive design standards to encourage the provision of accessible homes in communities.
- Additional amendments throughout Zoning Bylaw 12800 for clarification and consistency.

Further detail on the methodology and rationale of the proposed amendments can be found in Attachment 2 - Summary of Draft Amendments, with the proposed amendments found in Attachment 3 - Mark-up of Proposed Text Amendment to Zoning Bylaw 12800.

In addition to amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800, consultation highlighted other initiatives that could support positive outcomes for garage and garden suites. Stakeholders frequently noted the desire for educational materials that provide illustrated examples and explanations of regulations for garage and garden suites. Administration is in the process of developing a “how to” guide and an educational video.

### Implementation

Administration has taken into consideration typical development permit approval timelines, industry training and education, internal process change requirements as well as seasonal permitting volumes. Administration has proposed an effectiveness date of September 1, 2017. This will also provide time for new notification processes to be established to ensure neighbours are informed of new Class A garage and garden suite development.

### Conclusion

The proposed bylaw balances the objective of improving garage and garden suite buildability by adding increased design flexibility and opportunities, while mitigating impacts on adjacent properties.

### Policy

This proposed bylaw supports *The Way We Grow*, Edmonton's Municipal Development Plan:

- 3.5.1.1 Support redevelopment and residential infill that contribute to the livability and adaptability of established neighbourhoods (see Map 1: Land Development Concept) and which are sensitive to existing development.
- 4.2.1.1: Support neighbourhood revitalization, redevelopment and residential infill that contributes to the livability and adaptability of established neighbourhoods.
- 4.2.1.6: Optimize the use of existing infrastructure in established neighbourhoods.
- 4.4.1.1: Provide a broad and varied housing choice, incorporating housing for various demographic and income groups in all neighbourhoods.
- 4.5.1.1: Work proactively and in partnership with others to meet a wide range of affordable housing needs in all areas of the city.

### Corporate Outcomes

*The Way Ahead*, Edmonton's Strategic Plan, 2009-2016:

This bylaw contributes to the corporate outcomes "Edmonton is attractive and compact" and "Edmonton is an environmentally sustainable and resilient city" as it will facilitate more efficient use of land, development in established areas of the city, and higher quality design in the development of garage and garden suites.

### Public Consultation

A summary of the themes and comments received by multiple stakeholders is provided in Attachment 4. A draft of this report and the bylaw amendment was circulated for information on June 7, 2017, to Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, Urban Development Institute, Infill Development Edmonton Association, Canadian Home Builders Association - Edmonton Region, and other external stakeholders who have been involved in the development of these amendments.

### Attachments

1. Bylaw 18115
2. Summary of Draft Amendments
3. Mark-up of Proposed Text Amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800
4. Summary of Public Consultation